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RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 2835
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 2852
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RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 2269
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NEW DELHI 000318

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SUBJECT: SUCCESS OF US-INDIA MISSILE DEFENSE PLANEX CALLS
FOR WAY FORWARD

Classified By: Political Counselor Geoffrey Pyatt for Reasons 1.4 (B, D
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¶1. (C) Summary: The U.S.-India Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) Planning Exercise (Planex) held January 11-12, 2006 in Hyderabad sparked lively discussions on virtual threat depictions, MD designs and operational challenges related to ballistic MD execution. The Planex players successfully completed four simulations that demonstrated the capabilities of BMD in responding to regional threats. The overwhelming success of the exercise marks the latest bilateral interaction with India on MD, and paves the way for more ambitious cooperation in the future, possibly to include command-and-control and BMD acquisitions from the U.S. End Summary

¶2. (C) The U.S.-India Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) Planning Exercise (Planex) held January 11-12, 2006 at Research Center Imarat (RCI) in Hyderabad completed four interactive simulations of deploying MD systems to respond to regional threat scenarios. The GOI's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) Disarmament and International Security Division (DISA) had provided in September 2005 five specific attack scenarios that they wanted the Planex to simulate. According to the Joint National Integration Center (JNIC) programmers, this input represented an unprecedented level of involvement by a partner country in developing the exercise. The attack scenarios included details such as the types of missiles, location of launch sites and the trajectory of incoming threats.

13. (C) The simulations attracted an average of 20 Indian participants at any given time, including representatives from MEA, RCI, Defense Research Development Organization (DRDO), the National Security Council Secretariat (NCSC), and the Chief Integrated Defense Staff (CIDS). The simulations depicted a "Country A" threatened by short, medium and long-range missile systems in neighboring "Country C" and, as a result of proliferation from Country C, "Country B." During the simulation, a senior commander oversaw the entire defense system, two tactical commanders supervised the north and south, and two players in each hemisphere controlled two defensive systems each. After two runs, the players designed the defensive strategy themselves by prioritizing assets, locating sensors and interceptors, and determining the default salvo size.

14. (C) The entire program generated intense discussions on tactical issues concerning MD systems. Led by the JNIC moderators, the players debated whether to protect cities before military installations, centralize or decentralize command and control operations, and how to calculate the ideal number of interceptors needed to neutralize a particular threat. Dr. Saraswat, director of RCI, offered guidance to the participants during the planning sessions, and asked detailed questions while reviewing results. In addition, the two MEA representatives were actively involved throughout the program. Lively conversations also occurred between the Indian players and the JNIC programmers, who coached them through the initial rounds. The RCI participants quickly displaced the Americans at the consoles, showing a thorough understanding of the simulation software

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and MD stratgy. JNIC participants remarked that the Indian participants quickly grasped all the concepts associated with the operational challenges of planning a BMD system.

15. (C) Concluding the program, Dr. Saraswat encouraged both sides to launch the next phase of our MD cooperation. "This was a great learning experience for my team, and for myself in particular," he summarized. "We need to carve out the specifics of a roadmap ahead on technical cooperation and other aspects of future BMD collaboration," he urged. He also recommended adding a policy-level session. Naveen Srivastava, Deputy Secretary in MEA/DISA, endorsed the idea of developing a way forward, and added that "the U.S. and India should work out a framework that allows Dr. Saraswat and JNIC to proceed on (cooperative activities) on their own." Such a way forward, he continued, would build on the significant accomplishments of the completed Planex.

16. (C) Comment: The success of Planex 06 has generated sufficient momentum that gives the U.S. the opportunity to propose more ambitious levels of BMD cooperation with India. Dividing MD cooperation on three parallel paths could lead to enhanced collaboration. The first track would involve planning for an ongoing program of exercises. An initial planning meeting in New Delhi in April could involve some policy makers, while a second meeting in Colorado Springs would give the Indian side more exposure to MD simulations and strategy. A third meeting in New Delhi in September will finalize the terms of the exercise, which would occur in December 2006 in New Delhi. The New Delhi locale would help facilitate the addition of a policy component that involves the appropriate officials.

17. (C) Comment continued: Formulating a framework that provides for additional collaborative activities belongs on a second track. On the margins of Planex, RCI representatives expressed interest in contributing to joint research and development efforts, and it appears that they have the resources and skills to add value to projects with the U.S. Finally, on a third path, the U.S. needs to be ready to respond positively if the GOI pursues the acquisition of the PAC-3 system. The enthusiasm and skills displayed during

Planex 06 requires the U.S. to craft a way forward on greater BMD cooperation with India.

18. (U) Comment continued: Post commends the JNIC and MDA team for a job well done.

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